

The Apostles' Creed



The Apostles' Creed

- *Intro to the Creed Itself*
- *God the Father (part 1)*



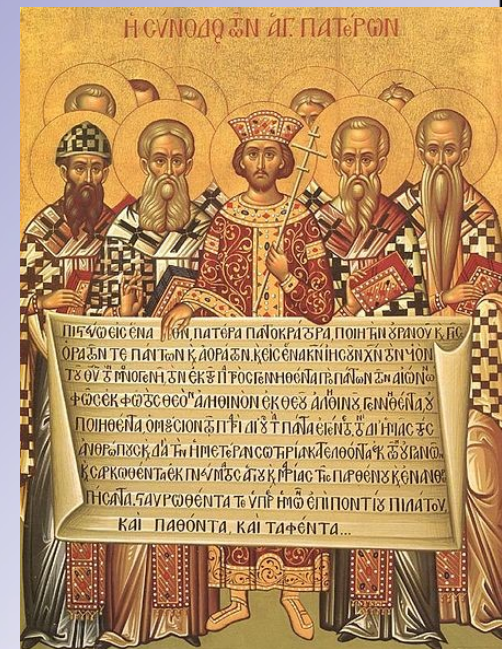
The Apostles' Creed

- *Quick reminder—*
 - The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
 - It wasn't written by the Apostles
(it was written in the late 4th Century by Bishop Ambrose of Milan)



The Apostles' Creed

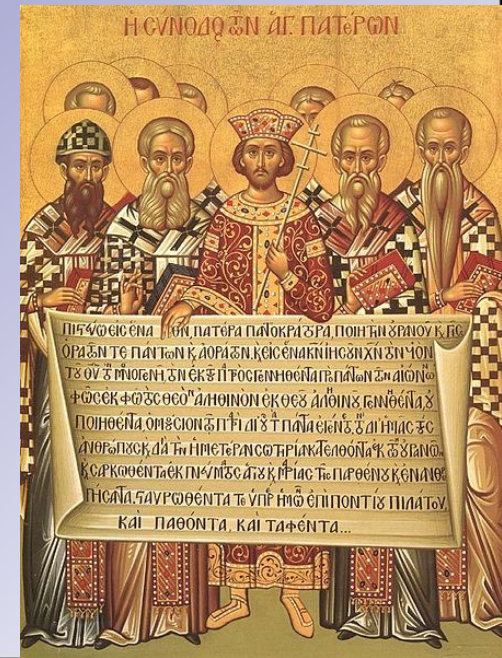
- Quick reminder—
 - The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
 - It wasn't written by the Apostles
 - It wasn't written to be an “official” creed (the Nicene Creed was still the official one)



The Apostles' Creed

- Quick reminder—
 - The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
 - It wasn't written by the Apostles
 - It wasn't written to be an “official” creed
 - The one used today isn't even the *original* one (it was just so popular that the Roman Catholic Church co-opted it and unilaterally tweaked it around the turn of the 8th Century)

(and all of the churches who were still using the official, agree-upon *Nicene Creed* shouted, “Hey, wait a minute...!”)



The Apostles' Creed

- Quick reminder—
 - The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
 - It wasn't written by the Apostles
 - It wasn't written to be an “official” creed
 - The one used today isn't even the *original* one
 - And even the versions that we use today are still just interpretive *translations* of the *tweaked* creed

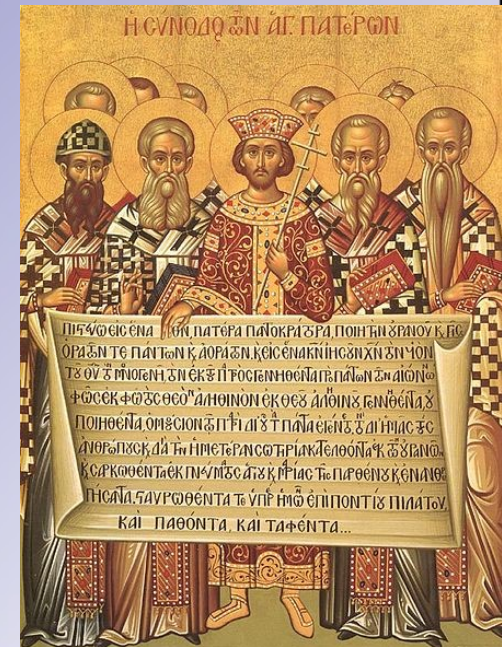
(translating the original Latin of the Apostles' Creed, which itself was tweaking the Greek of the prior Nicene Creed)



The Apostles' Creed

- **Quick reminder—**

- The official, original “Apostles' Creed” is none of those.
- All of this is to say that even though the whole point of the Creed is that every congregation is upholding more or less the same stuff, we should probably allow a bit of latitude about how we actually put it together today (so long as we're all still covering the same basic stuff in more or less the same basic ways)



The Apostles' Creed

So when we read the Creed today, “Re-Tweaked” Creed (*First Covenant*) *this* is the version that we make use of here at First Covenant—

- The focus here goes back to the *original* Nicene and Apostles' Creeds and points to the fact that Jesus really, honestly was *dead*—in every real and human sense of the word
- Again, this points back to the force of the original Creeds and focuses on the Church as a whole across the globe—not that we're all always on the same doctrinal page or under the same human management, but that we should still live in *harmony* with one another as part of the same *family*
- Which is why we phrase *this* line *not* as pointing to the Roman Catholic idea of “saints” being *uniquely* holy dead people that we should *pray* to, but rather to the Biblical idea that *all* of us who are currently living in God's Kingdom can and should be a “holy family” in communion with one another at Christ's table (both metaphorically and literally)—the Church is the Body of Christ, and thus a community of holy people (i.e.; the “saints”), connecting every Christian living now with those who came before and will come after

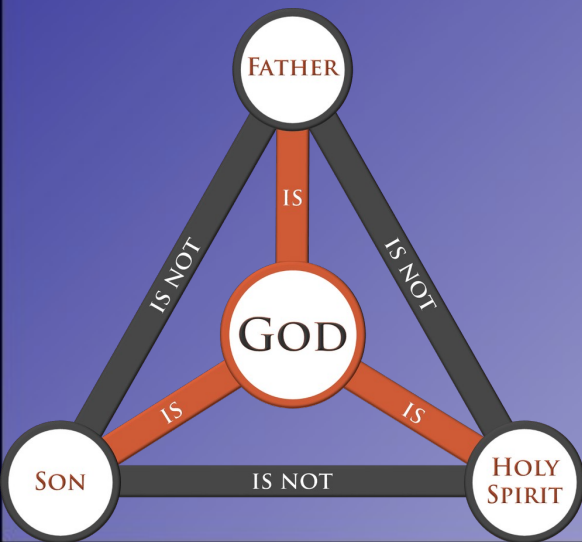
- We believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth;
- And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord;
- Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the Virgin Mary;
- Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried;
- Who descended into **the grave**
- And the third day rose again from the dead.
- Who ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
- from where He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.
- We believe in the Holy Spirit.
- We believe in the **holy and complete Church**,
- which is the communion of the saints,
- We believe in the forgiveness of sins.
- We believe in the resurrection of the body,
- and the life everlasting. Amen

So let's start looking at all of that...



God the Father

- “We believe in God the Father Almighty, the maker of heaven and earth...”

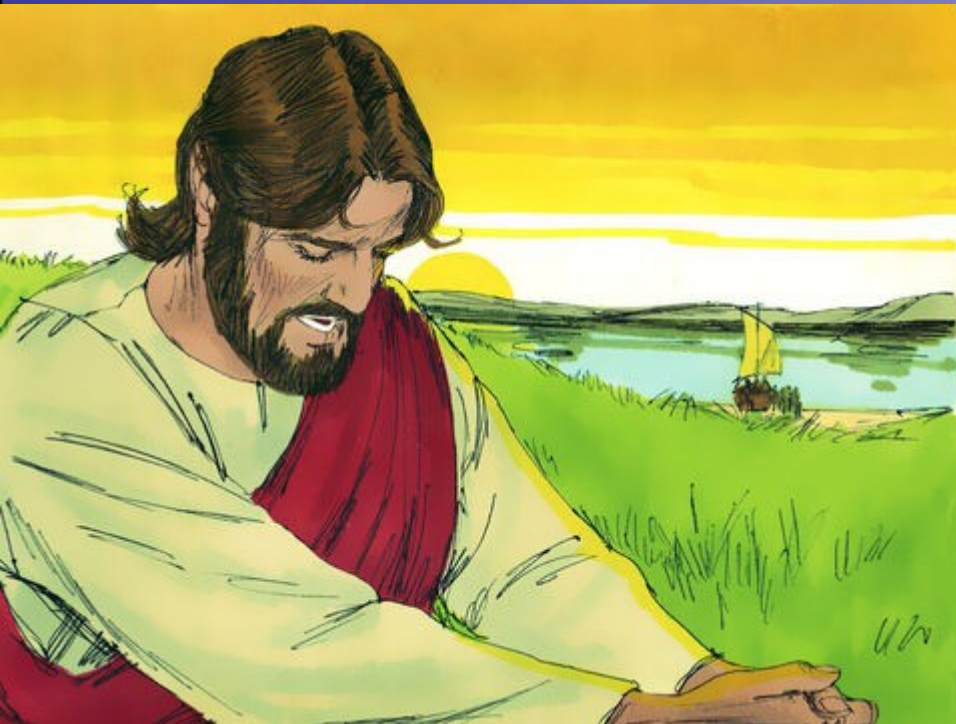


God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
(for instance, when Jesus prayed “Our Father...” during His “Sermon on the Mount” in Matthew 6:9)

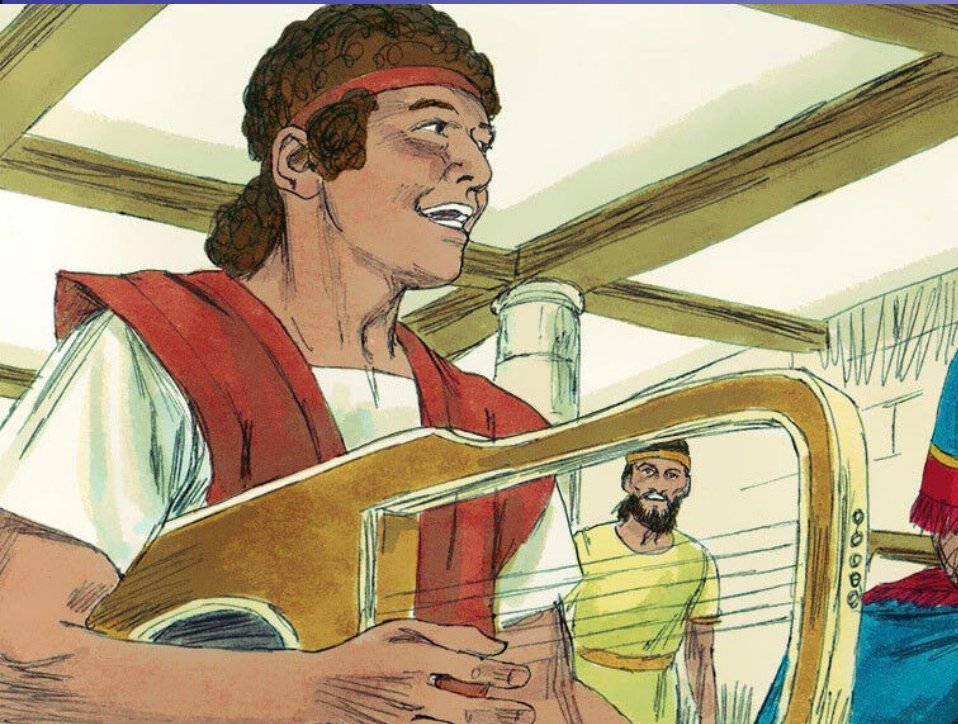


God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
 - But even in Psalm 103:13, David sang,
“As a father has compassion on his children, so YAHWEH has compassion on those who fear him”



God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
 - But even in Psalm 103:13, David sang
 - And in Proverbs 3:11-12, Solomon taught, “Do not despise YAHWEH’s discipline and do not resent his rebuke, because YAHWEH disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in.”



God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
 - But even in Psalm 103:13, David sang
 - And in Proverbs 3:11-12, Solomon taught
 - And even Isaiah says,
“You are our Father, though Abraham does not know us or Israel acknowledge us; you, O YAHWEH, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name.”
(Isaiah 63:16)
 - “O YAHWEH, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand.”
(Isaiah 64:8)



God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
- The difference is that in the Old Testament, the idea of God as “Father” was *metaphorical*, not *literal*
 - For instance, Moses chided the people, “Is this the way you repay YAHWEH, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (Deuteronomy 32:6)
 - God is our “Father” in that we have all come from His creative work and in that He had declared Israel to be His tribe that He personally watched over and “raised” to eventual maturity—that He’s the ultimate “Patriarch”
 - And that’s completely true and an accurate metaphor, isn’t it?

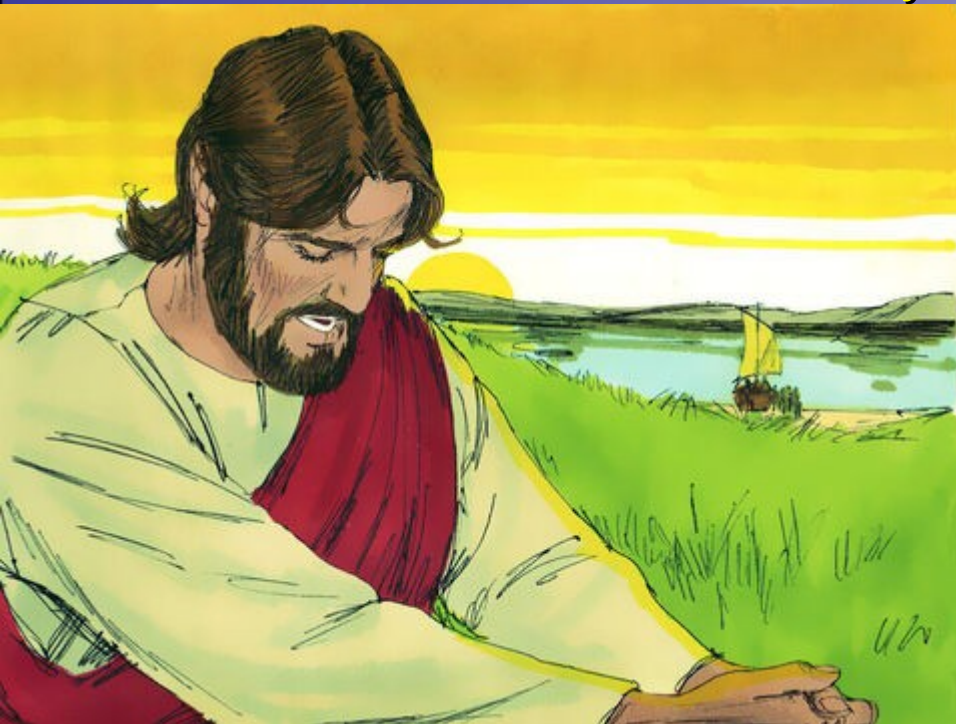


God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
- The difference is that in the Old Testament, the idea of God as “Father” was *metaphorical*, not *literal*
 - For instance, Moses chided the people, “Is this the way you repay YAHWEH, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (Deuteronomy 32:6)
 - God is our “Father” in that we have all come from His creative work and in that He had declared Israel to be His tribe that He personally watched over and “raised” to eventual maturity—that He’s the ultimate “Patriarch”
 - But no one in the Old Testament ever addressed God as “Dad”—as if *that* was *inherently* who He is to us, personally—like Jesus did
 - Of course, some of that clearly relates us back to discussions of the Trinity...

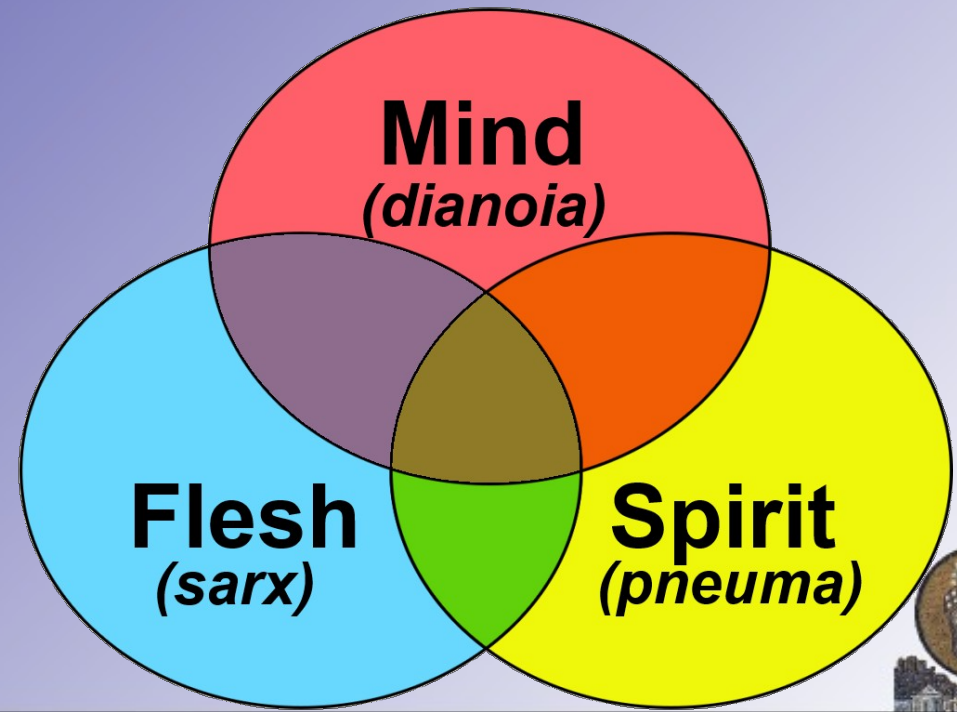
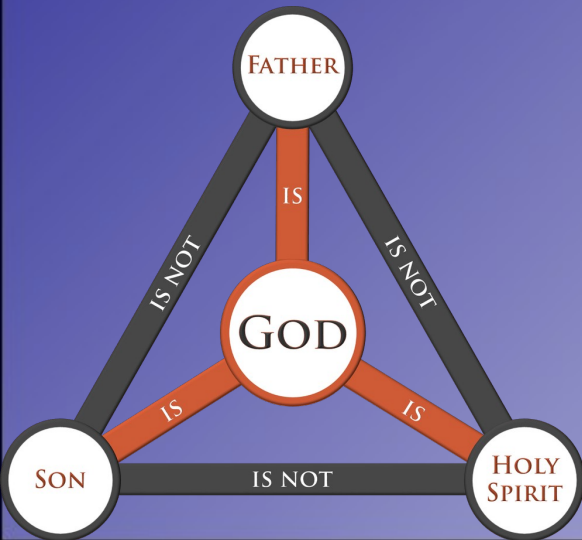


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
 - To be an actual, physical “person,” someone has to have a mind that wills, a spirit that gives dynamism, and flesh that gives substance
 - The Greek words for these might sound familiar

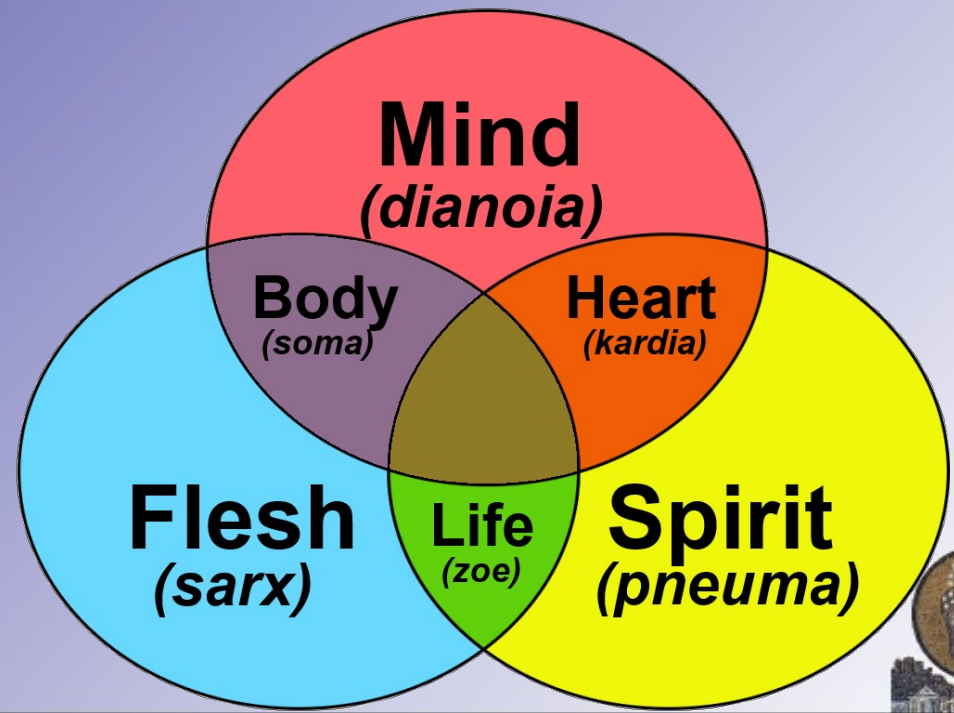
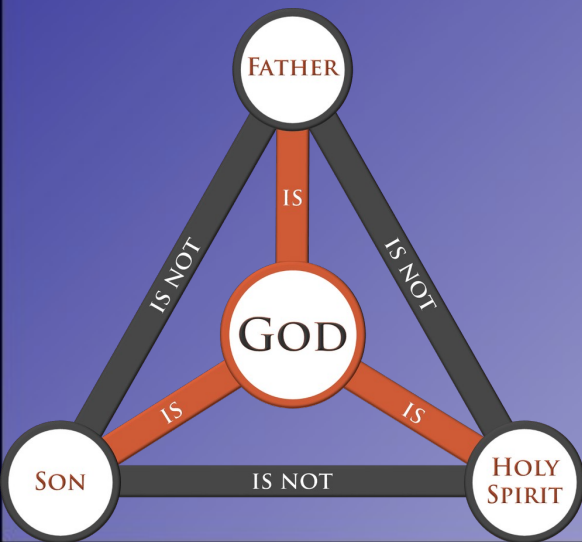


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
 - To be an actual, physical “person,” someone has to have a mind that wills, a spirit that gives dynamism, and flesh that gives substance
 - Each of these parts interrelates with the other parts—they aren't static or disconnected, even though they're completely distinct from one another

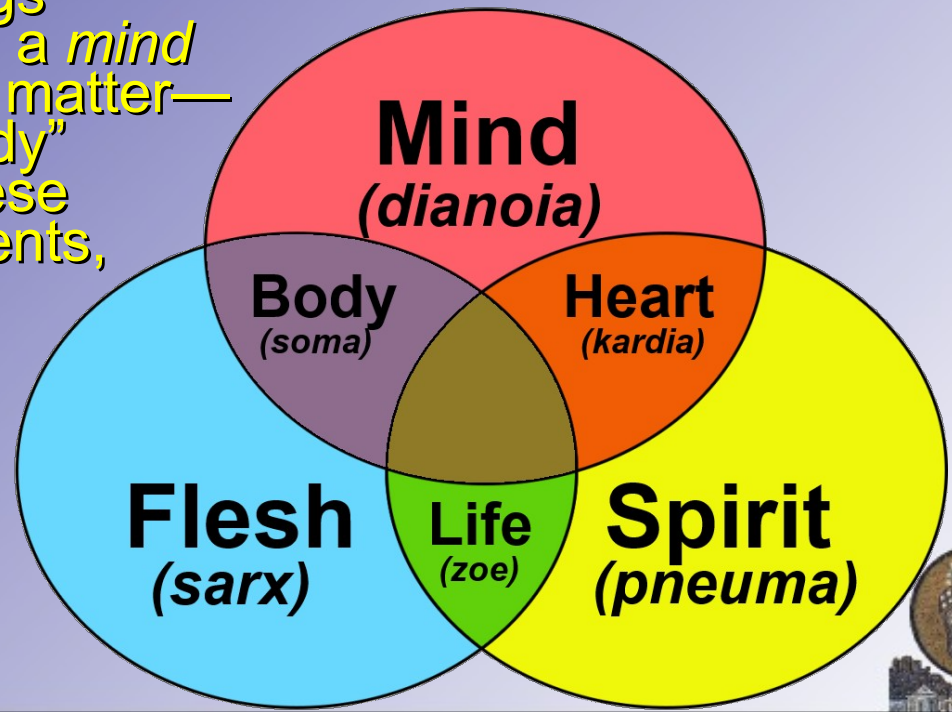
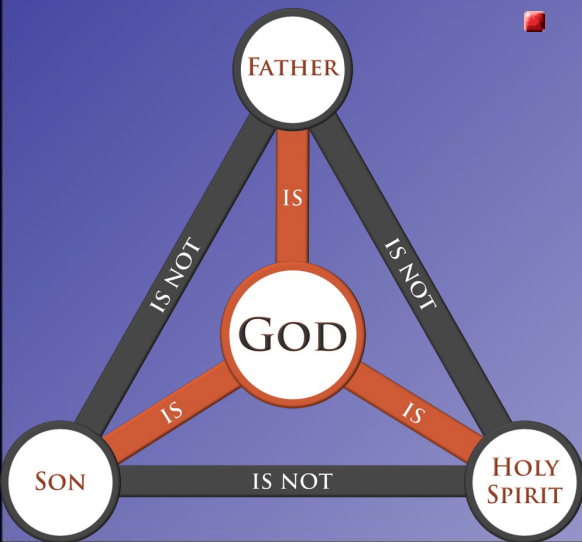


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
 - To be an actual, physical “person,” someone has to have a mind that wills, a spirit that gives dynamism, and flesh that gives substance
 - Each of these parts interrelates with the other parts
 - So, for instance, a lump of *flesh* could be a carcass—but with a *spirit* working within it, it's “alive”
 - Or a living *spirit* that's connected to *intention* and *will* can have “feelings”
 - Or *flesh* that has a *mind* isn't just organic matter—it's a “human body”
 - Without *all* of these interactive elements, it can't *truly* be thought of as a “person”

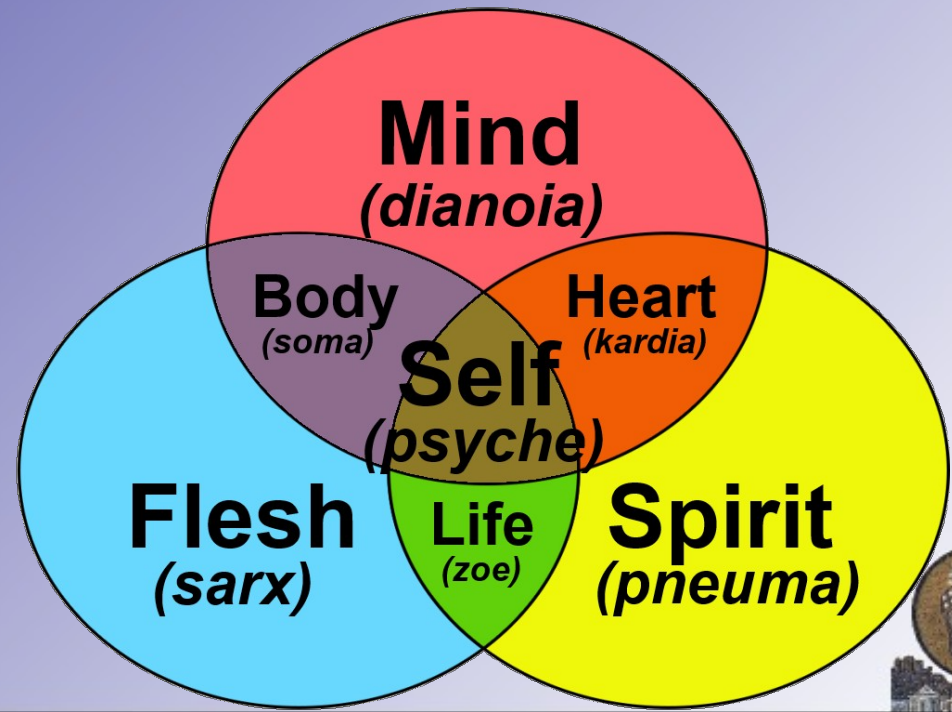
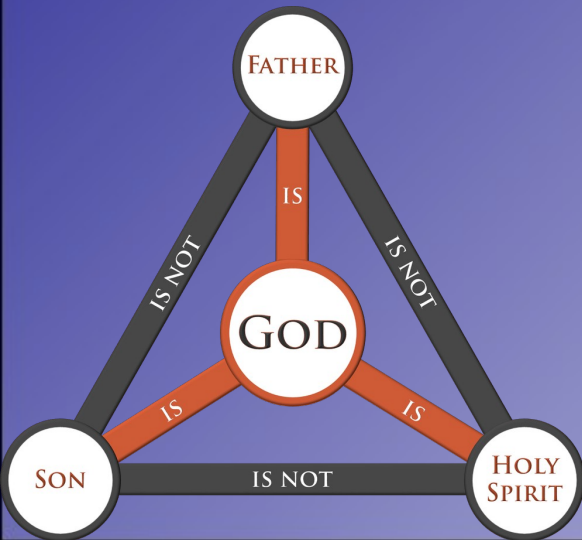


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
 - To be an actual, physical “person,” someone has to have a mind that wills, a spirit that gives dynamism, and flesh that gives substance
 - Each of these parts interrelates with the other parts
 - Put all of these elements together in a person, and the interactions create a sense of “Self”
(The self-comprehension of one’s existence as a distinct person)



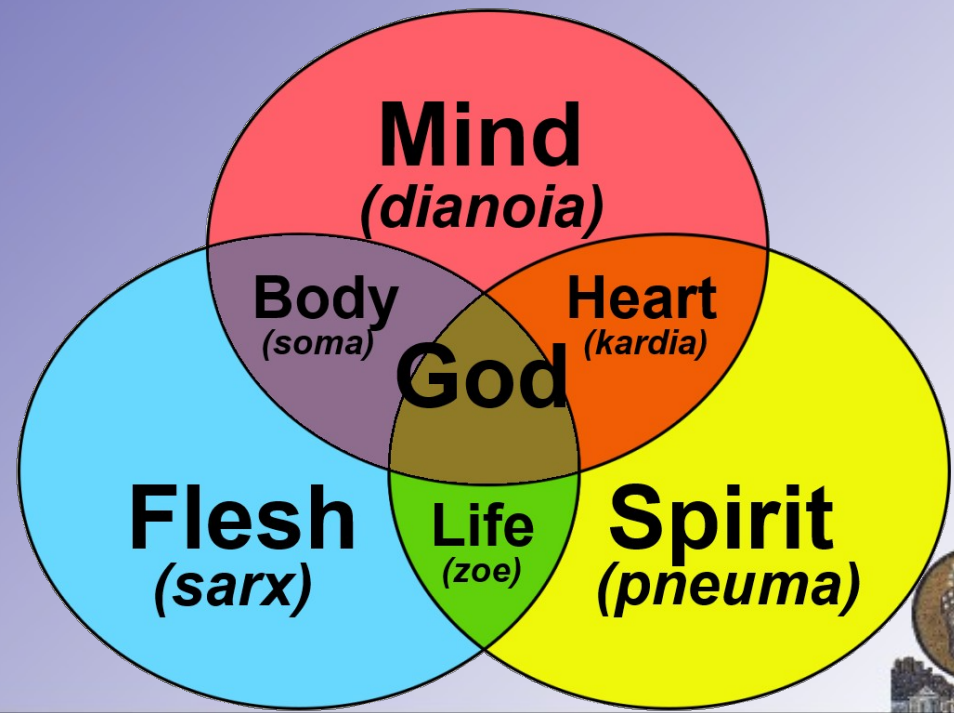
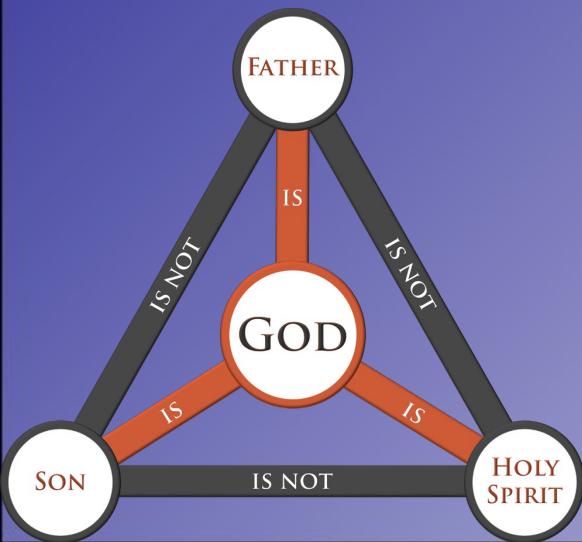
God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well

(so long as we consciously remember that this is a Greek philosophical construct being applied to an attempt to anthropomorphize God so that we can understand Him by diminishing Him to our levels)

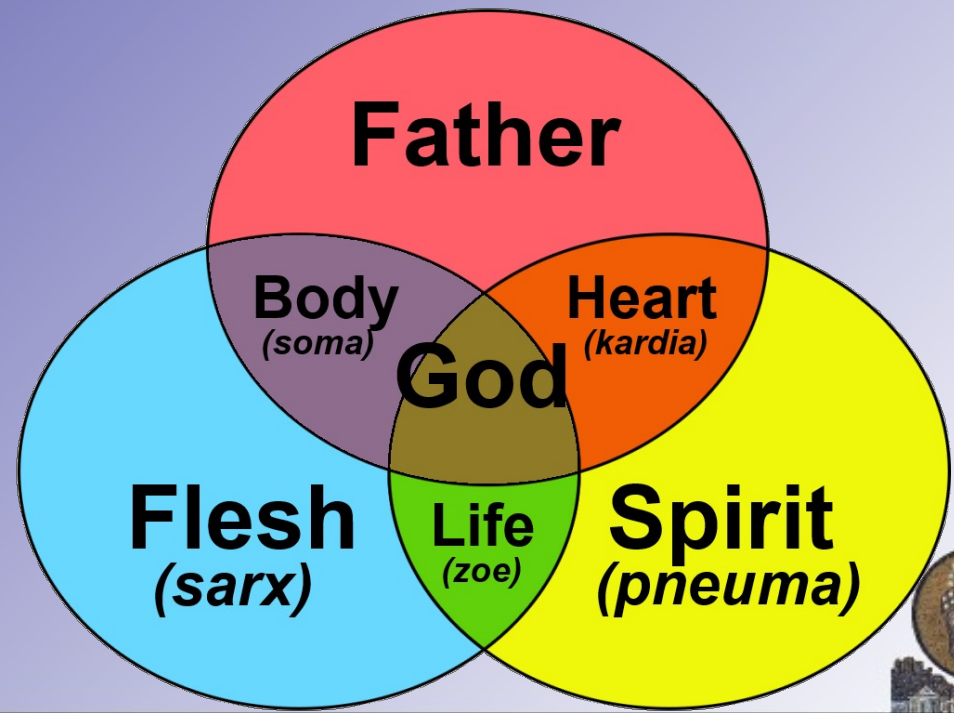
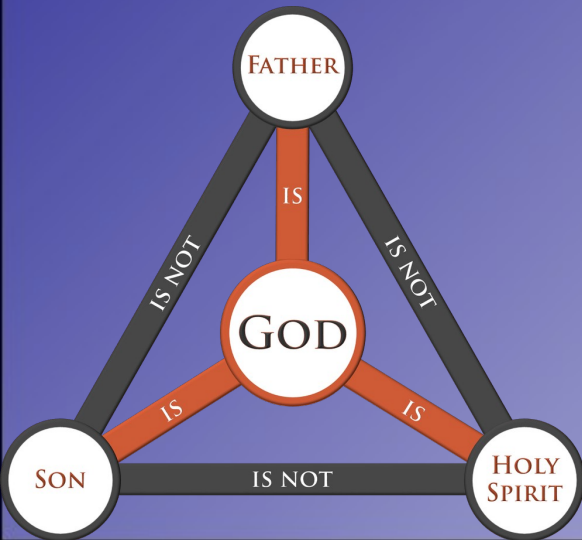


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
 - The thought, will, intention, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Mind” of God—could be seen as the “Father”
(See Matthew 7:21 or Luke 22:42, etc.)

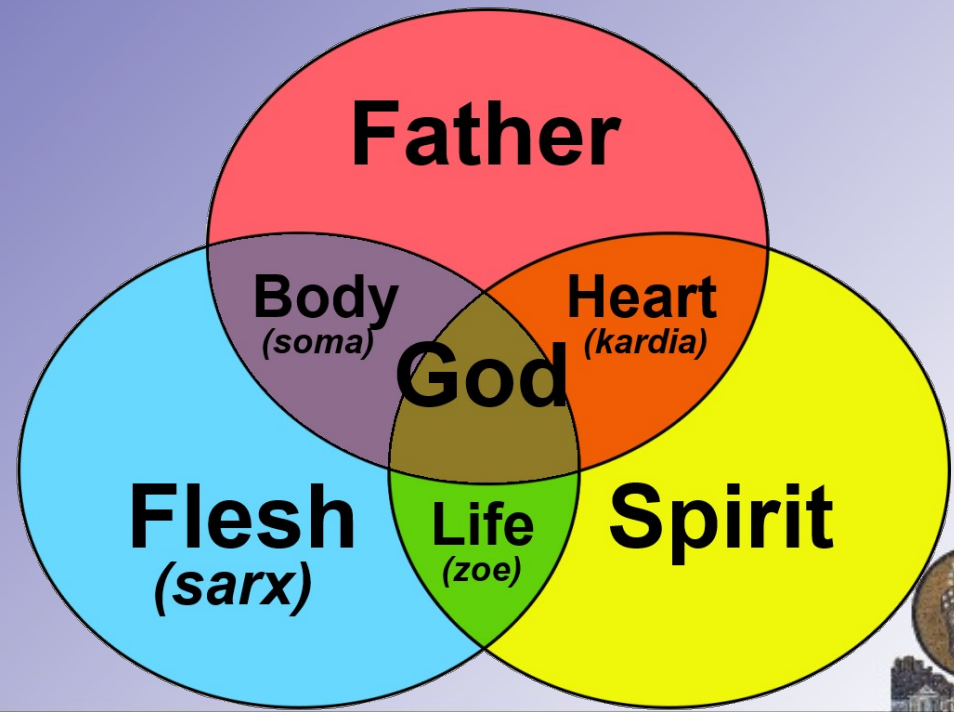
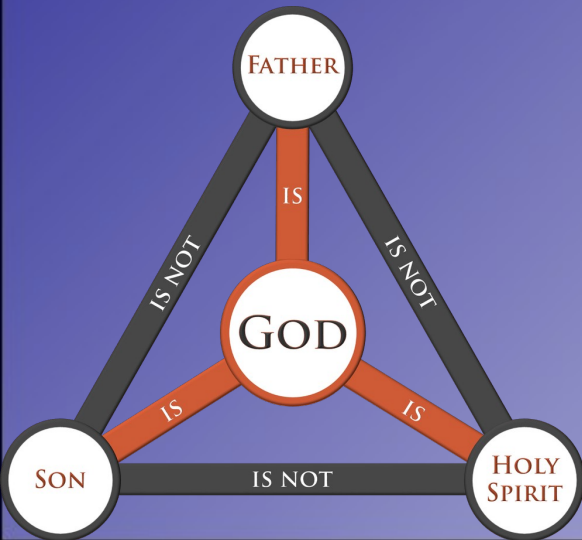


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
 - The thought, will, intention, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Mind” of God—could be seen as the “Father”
 - The power, dynamism, life-giving, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Vitality” of God—could be seen as the “Spirit”
(See John 6:63 or 1 Peter 3:18 or John 3:5-8, etc.)

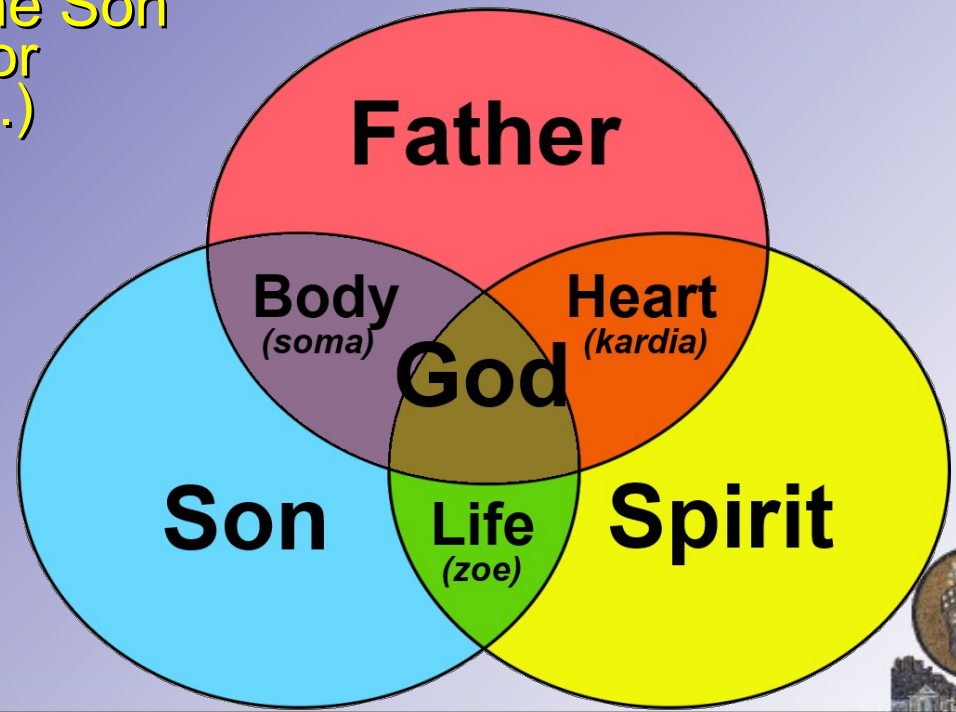
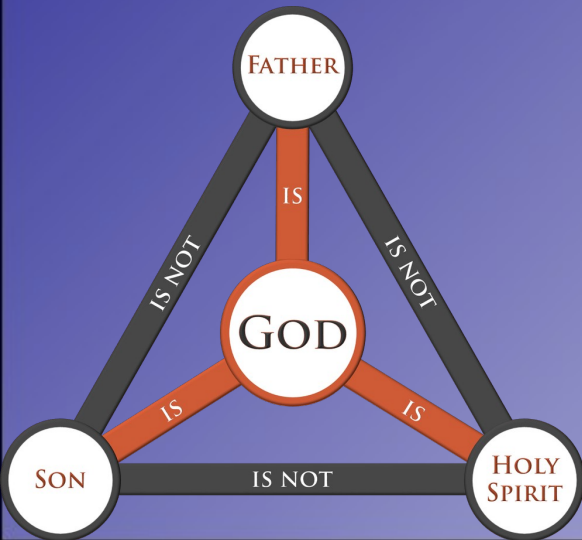


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
 - The thought, will, intention, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Mind” of God—could be seen as the “Father”
 - The power, dynamism, life-giving, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Vitality” of God—could be seen as the “Spirit”
 - The physicality of God—i.e.; and becoming “Flesh”—could be seen as the Son
(See John 1:14 or Romans 8:3, etc.)

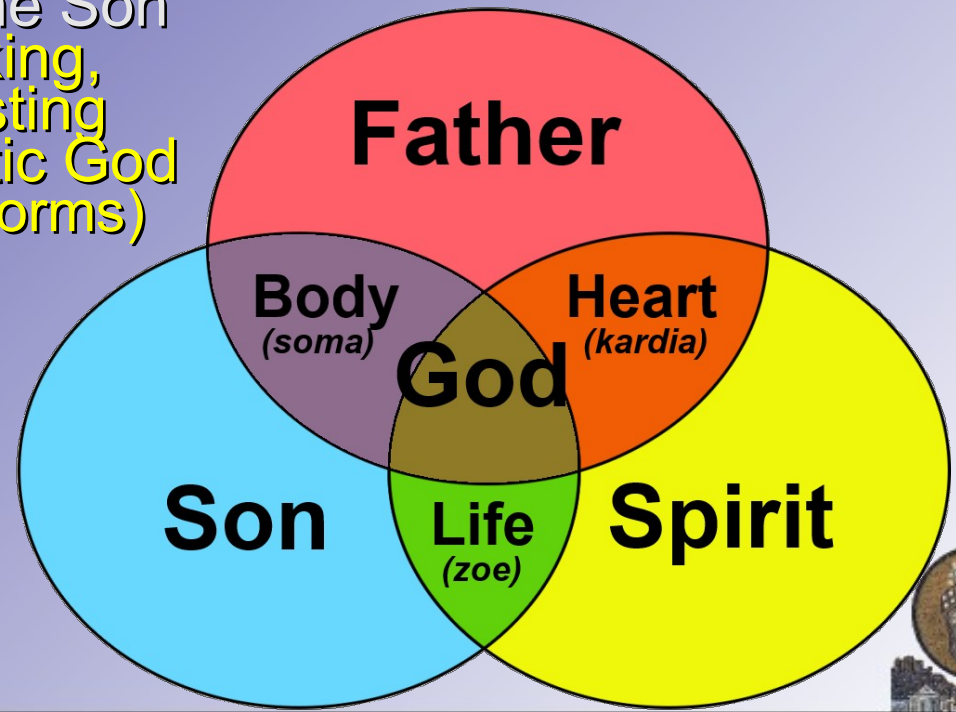
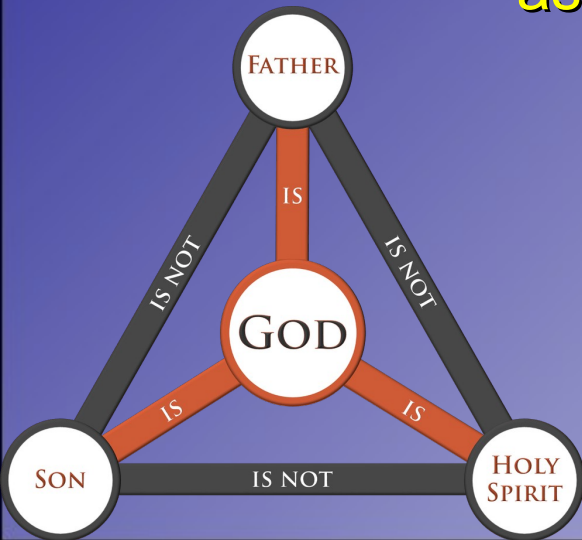


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
 - The thought, will, intention, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Mind” of God—could be seen as the “Father”
 - The power, dynamism, life-giving, etc., of God—i.e.; the “Vitality” of God—could be seen as the “Spirit”
 - The physicality of God—i.e.; and becoming “Flesh”—could be seen as the Son
 - They're *all* interlocking, simultaneously existing aspects of an holistic God (in their *perfect* forms)

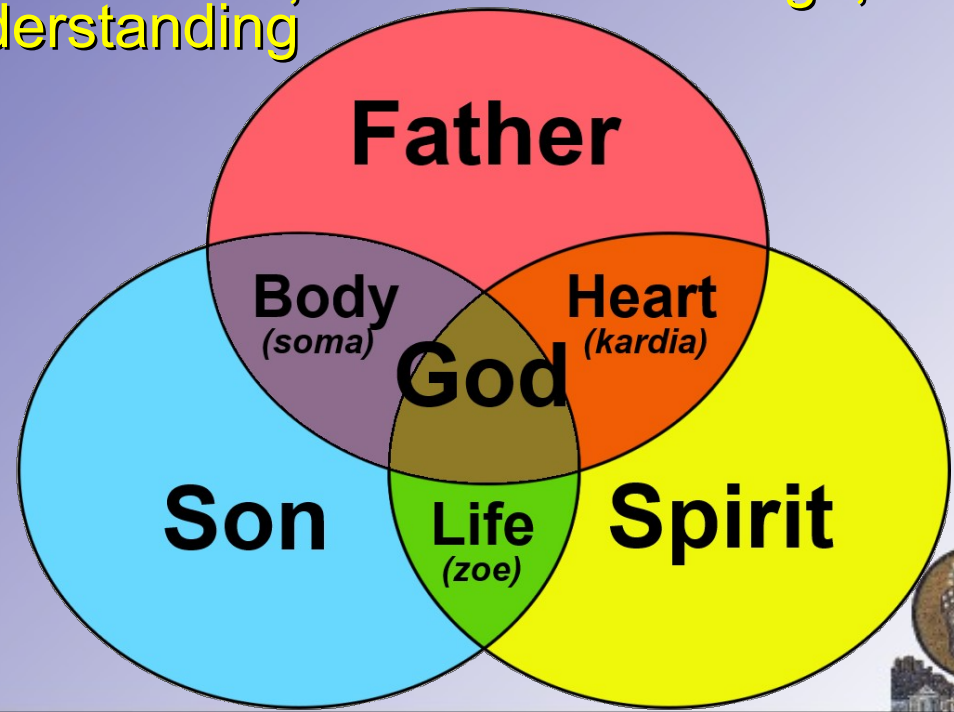
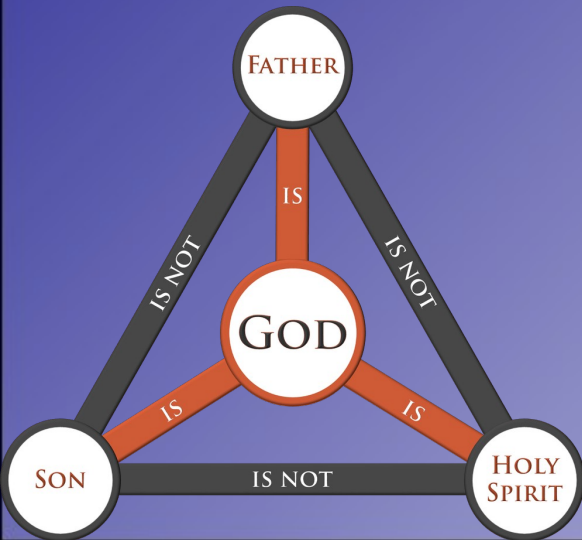


God the Father



Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
- All of this is to say that when we call God “Father” we aren't talking about a distinct god among three or about a literal progenitor or a temporary avatar
 - We're talking about the aspect of God that is His mind, will, purposes, determinations, etc.—His sovereign, comprehensive understanding



God the Father

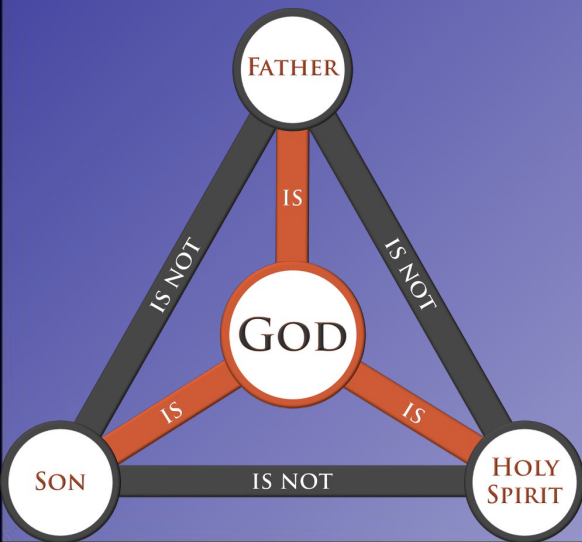


Crazy deep dive into Greek philosophy...

- In classical Greek thought, the “person” is usually considered a conglomeration of three parts
- The argument can be made that we can see God and the Trinity in this as well
- All of this is to say that when we call God “Father” we aren't talking about a distinct god among three or about a literal progenitor or a temporary avatar
- **Think about how all three aspects are working together, even from the start**
 - In Genesis 1:1-3—

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. And God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light.”

- God the Father—the will and determination
- God the Spirit—His dynamic, living being
- God the Son—i.e.; the “Word” of God, the prime actor in the creation of the physical universe
 - How does this work in Deuteronomy 32:6, John 1:1-3, 14, or Colossians 1:15-17?
(is the Creator the Father or Jesus?)



God the Father



Funky little teaching moment...

- Okay, some Christians have the erroneous notion that Jesus was the first one to express God as our “Father” in the Bible
- The difference is that in the Old Testament, the idea of God as “Father” was *metaphorical*, not *literal*
 - For instance, Moses chided the people, “Is this the way you repay YAHWEH, O foolish and unwise people? Is he not your father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?” (Deuteronomy 32:6)
 - God is our “Father” in that we have all come from His creative work and in that He had declared Israel to be His tribe that He personally watched over and “raised” to eventual maturity—that He’s the ultimate “Patriarch”
 - But no one in the Old Testament ever addressed God as “Dad”—as if *that* was *inherently* who He is to us, personally—like Jesus did
 - Of course, some of that clearly relates us back to discussions of the Trinity... but not all of it

